

What is claimed is:

1. A method of manufacturing a pharmaceutical dose comprising the steps of:
 - supplying one fluid pharmaceutical component in a reservoir;
 - providing a pharmaceutical receiving medium;
 - fluidically coupling the reservoir to a fluid drop generator; and
 - activating the fluid drop generator to eject a variably selected quantity of the one pharmaceutical component onto the pharmaceutical receiving medium.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of supplying the pharmaceutical component includes the step of providing the one pharmaceutical component in a replaceable reservoir fluidically coupled to the fluid drop generator.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of supplying the pharmaceutical component further comprises the step of providing a plurality of pharmaceutical components each in a separate reservoir, each reservoir fluidically coupled to a different one of a plurality of fluid drop generators.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of providing the pharmaceutical component comprises the step of providing a plurality of pharmaceutical components in a single multiple chamber reservoir.
5. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
 - providing a pharmaceutical component parameter information storage element on the reservoir.
6. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
 - providing a control for controlling the activation of the fluid drop generator to dispense a selectable quantity of the one pharmaceutical component.

7. The method of claim 6 further comprising:
providing a signal to the control from a remote signal source
specifying a selected quantity of that one pharmaceutical component to be
dispensed onto one pharmaceutical receiving medium.

8. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
dispensing a barrier component onto the pharmaceutical receiving
medium sealing a prior dispensed one pharmaceutical component on the
pharmaceutical receiving medium.

9. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
weighing the pharmaceutical receiving medium after a variably
selectable quantity of the one pharmaceutical component has been dispensed
onto the pharmaceutical receiving medium to determine the dispensing of the
selected quantity of the one pharmaceutical component.

10. The method of claim 9 further comprising the step of:
comparing the weight of the pharmaceutical receiving medium with
a reference weight corresponding to the weight of an empty pharmaceutical
receiving medium and the weight of the variably selected quantity of the one
pharmaceutical component to verify that the variably selected quantity of the one
pharmaceutical component has been fully dispensed onto the pharmaceutical
receiving medium.

11. The method of claim 1 performed with an apparatus for
manufacturing a pharmaceutical dose comprising:
means for supplying one fluid pharmaceutical component in a
reservoir;
means for providing a pharmaceutical receiving medium;
means for fluidically coupling the reservoir to a fluid drop generator;
and

means for activating the fluid drop generator to eject a variably selected quantity of the one pharmaceutical component onto the pharmaceutical receiving medium.

12. An apparatus for manufacturing a pharmaceutical dose onto a pharmaceutical receiving medium, the apparatus comprising:

- a reservoir containing one fluid pharmaceutical component;
- a fluid drop generator fluidically coupled to the reservoir; and
- a control activating the fluid drop generator to eject a variably selected quantity of the one pharmaceutical component onto the medium.

13. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the reservoir and the fluid drop generator are provided as an integral replaceable unit.

14. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the reservoir comprises: a plurality of reservoirs, each containing a different pharmaceutical component.

15. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein the fluid dispenser comprises:

- a plurality of fluid drop generators, at least one separate one of the plurality of fluid drop generators connected to one of the plurality of reservoirs.

16. The apparatus of claim 12 further comprising:

- a signal communication receiver coupled to the control and an external telecommunications network, the communication receiver communicating a signal from a remote signal source specifying the variably selectable quantity of the one pharmaceutical component to the control.

17. The apparatus of claim 12 further comprising:

- a weight detector for detecting and outputting signals corresponding to the weight of the pharmaceutical receiving medium after the one

pharmaceutical component has been dispensed onto the pharmaceutical receiving medium.

18. The apparatus of claim 12 wherein the one reservoir comprises:

a single reservoir includes a plurality of separate compartments, each compartment containing a different pharmaceutical component.

19. The apparatus of claim 12 further comprising:

an information storage element carried on the reservoir and the fluid drop generator, the information storage element electrically connectable to the control and providing communicatable information to the control of at least one parameter of the pharmaceutical component and the fluid drop generator.

20. A replaceable cartridge usable in an apparatus for manufacturing a pharmaceutical dose, the apparatus including a control receiving data indicative of the pharmaceutical dose and dispensing droplets of at least one pharmaceutical component onto a pharmaceutical receiving medium, the replaceable cartridge comprising:

a reservoir containing at least one pharmaceutical component; and
a fluid drop generator fluidically coupled to the reservoir for dispensing droplets from the reservoir to the pharmaceutical receiving medium.

21. The replaceable cartridge of claim 20 further comprising:

an information storage element carried on the reservoir and the fluid drop generator, the information storage element electrically connectable to the control and providing communicatable information to the control of at least one parameter of the pharmaceutical component and the fluid drop generator.

22. The replaceable cartridge of claim 21 wherein the one parameter stored in the information storage element identifies the pharmaceutical component in the reservoir.

23. The replaceable cartridge of claim 21 wherein:
the fluid drop generator is integrally coupled to the reservoir.

24. The replaceable cartridge of claim 23 wherein the
information storage element contains information specifying the number of drops
to be dispensed by the fluid drop generator.

25. The replaceable cartridge of claim 20 wherein:
the fluid drop generator is integrally coupled to the reservoir.

26. The replaceable cartridge of claim 20 wherein:
the reservoir is a single reservoir including a plurality of separate
components, each containing one pharmaceutical component.

27. A method of generating a custom pharmaceutical dose using
a fluid drop generator controlled by a controller to eject droplets of a
pharmaceutical component onto a pharmaceutical receiving medium, the method
comprising the steps of:

providing information to the controller indicative of a selected
pharmaceutical dose; and

selecting a number of fluid drops of the pharmaceutical component
to be ejected from a reservoir through the fluid drop generator in response to the
information.

28. The method of claim 27 wherein the step of selecting a
number of drops of the pharmaceutical component further comprises the steps of:

selecting at least one of a plurality of fluid drop generators, each
ejecting a different pharmaceutical component.

29. The method of claim 27 wherein the step of selecting a
number of drops of a pharmaceutical component further comprises the steps of:

selecting a number of drops of a plurality of different pharmaceutical components in a plurality of different dispensing sequences.

30. The method of claim 27 further comprising the step of:
reading at least one of a pharmaceutical component identification data, a reservoir parameter and a fluid drop generator parameter from an information storage element carried on one of the reservoir and the fluid drop generator.